REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the office action mailed July 16, 2003. Claims 34-38 are pending in this application. Claims 1-22 were previously cancelled and claims 23-32 were previously withdrawn. Applicants respectfully request early and favorable acceptance of this application.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 33-37 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Endo, U.S. Patent No. 5,168,175. Claim 33 has been cancelled, rendering moot the rejection with respect to claim 33. Claims 34-37 depend from, or are amended to depend from, claim 38, which is believed allowable as discussed below.

Accordingly, Applicants believe the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) is overcome.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claim 38 is objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of its former base and intervening claims. Claim 38 has been so rewritten, and claims 34-37 directly or indirectly depend from, or are amended to depend from, independent claim 38.

Therefore, claims 34-38 are believed to be in condition for allowance.
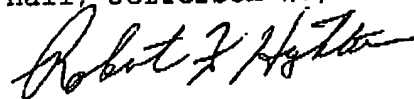
CONCLUSION

Applicants respectfully request consideration and allowance of claims 34-38.

Applicants have reviewed the prior art made of record in this case but believe that such art does not affect the patentability of the invention.

No fees are believed due pursuant to rule 1.136(a) as a result of this amendment. However, the Commissioner is authorized to deduct any fee, or credit any overpayment, to deposit account 501086.

If there are matters which can be discussed by telephone to further the prosecution of this application, applicants invite the examiner to call the undersigned attorney/agent at the examiner's convenience.

Respectfully submitted,
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